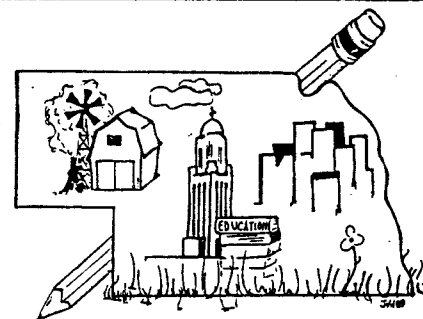


The Nebraska Observer

Vol. 5, No. 5, May 1, 1990



How Kay Orr's Campaign Made 197 Jobs Out of 20

by Frances Mendenhall

Kevin Mooney smelled a rat. His Scottsbluff radio station, KNEB, played an ad for the Orr reelection campaign which touted new job creation. The ad claimed that 197 new jobs had been generated by LB 775 in the Scottsbluff area. Radio journalists are smart people. Mooney knew there weren't that many new jobs in the community.

So he checked it out, talked to Dick Dresner of Dresner-Sykes, the Orr campaign's New York ad agency who created the ad, and found that four companies had applied for job creation credit against their income tax. Darling-Delaware listed 36 jobs; Gillette Dairy listed 100, Scottsbluff National Bank and Trust listed 30, and Nebraska Cellular listed 31, for a total of 197.

Mooney then contacted the companies. Here is what he found out.

The proposed expansion at the Darling-Delaware Pet Food Plant never materialized, but did yield 14 new jobs at Western Valley Processing when Darling Delaware took over the Western Valley plant. They were not the 14 for which credit had been sought, but Mooney figured they should count.

The planned expansion of Gillette Dairy occurred at the company's Norfolk operation; when asked about new jobs for Scottsbluff, the company spokesperson doubted that there would be any.

Scottsbluff National Bank and Trust had added six new jobs. Its president was still hopeful that the promised 30 jobs would be added by the end of the seven-year period allowed by LB 775.

But Nebraska Cellular Telephone could not be found in Scottsbluff.

The actual total, counting the 14 that reappeared under a different company, was not 197 but 20. Maybe next time the governor will hire local people to run her campaign.

Disclosure Law Passed

Meanwhile, about the same time, the Legislature finally passed LB 431, Sen. Wesely's bill requiring the Department of Revenue to disclose data it has about the jobs. Maybe those who have grown weary of raising their voices in skepticism about the effectiveness of tax credits for job creation will take heart.

Maybe people hearing incredible claims made by the governor's campaign will check out the real facts. Official data will not be available until the law takes effect. Wesely and others wanted that date to be in September, but a partisan vote rejected that idea and put it off until December, conveniently after

the November election. But if enough people choke when they hear outrageous claims as Kevin Mooney did, the true picture of LB 775 might still emerge in time for it to have its

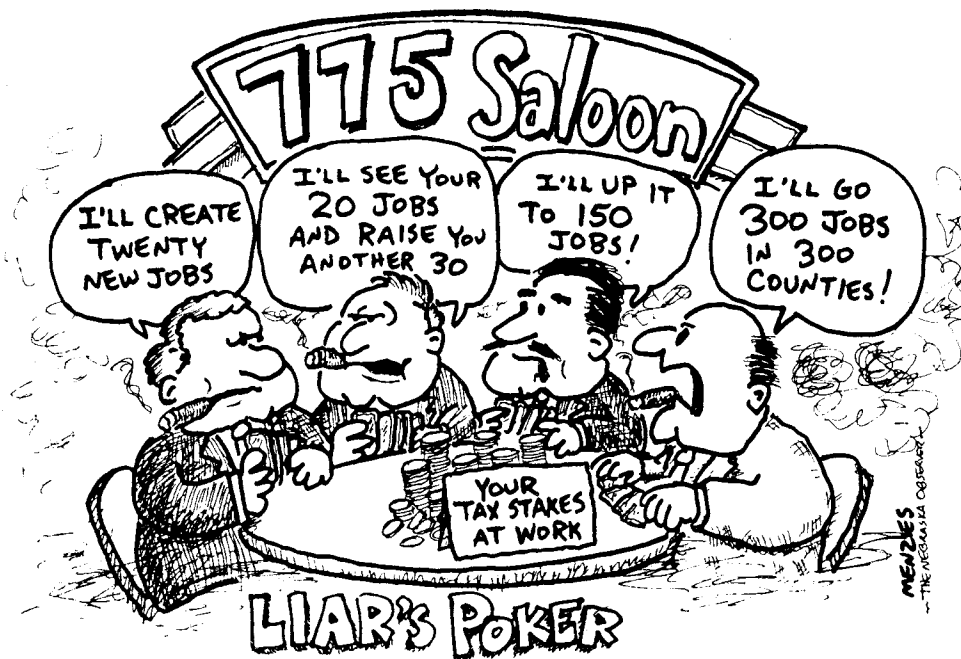
investment was going to the cities?

The Chamber of Commerce reports that 52.6 percent of the jobs for which credit has been applied are in the Omaha area. A more

Wages, Net Jobs Gained, and Real Cost to Taxpayers

Other unanswered questions remain until December when the disclosure law takes effect. What do these jobs pay? What we read in the World-Herald about wages is based on industry averages not real jobs. How many jobs were being eliminated by the same companies that were applying for credits for jobs created? What did the jobs cost the taxpayers in lost revenue? The meat packing jobs that are coming to Lexington with starting wages of about \$6 an hour, will cost the taxpayers about \$10,700 each according to Economic Research Associates. And, according to the people at ERA, IBP, the company doing the hiring, had chosen Lexington as its site before it got the added incentive of the tax credits.

There are some companies like IBP whom we believe would have expanded with or without LB 775. What we will never know even with the new disclosure law is how many like IBP there are.



proper effect on the gubernatorial race.

At the very least the governor's campaign should be held to standards of reasonable logic. When we obtained a copy of the Department of Revenue project report that the ad was based on, we discovered that two of the four companies making the claims had merely listed Scottsbluff among many other locations, intending to spread the planned jobs among the several spots. Scottsbluff was not even listed first in the pack. It was one of nineteen plus locations which were to share the 31 jobs applied for by Nebraska Cellular Telephone Corp. If the Orr campaign continues to do what they did in Scottsbluff, they will try to take credit for 31 times 19 or 589 jobs, when 31 were applied for and five are actually known to exist! Maybe this is what is meant by the multiplier effect.

Urban Development Favored

Then there is the question of whether the jobs being generated are skewing development in favor of urban areas. Three months ago the Observer reported the results of an inquiry it had made as to what cities and municipalities had reported increases in the amounts of their sales tax refunds. Credit for job creation is also applied against city sales tax under LB 775. Omaha had shown a 40-fold increase in sales tax refunds after the law took effect in 1987, and Lincoln showed a 49-fold increase. But we were unable to find even one other city that charged sales tax that had shown any change. Could it be that all the

meaningful figure for the smaller towns would be the percentage of jobs going outside of Omaha, Lincoln, and Lexington. (Lexington is atypical in that it is getting 1,200 jobs at one plant.) Cutting the pie up that way, we found that the smaller communities were being promised only 27.5 percent of the jobs, but they represent almost 50 percent of Nebraska's people. (For more of our data findings, see article on page 2.) Nobody knows how many they will actually get.

Statewide there has been an economic recovery since LB 775 was passed. But the recovery in Nebraska was no different from the recovery in the surrounding states which have no similar tax incentives.

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From the Editor

U.P./World-Herald Connection, View from Burke

by Frances Mendenhall

Jim Brentlinger, president of United Transportation Union's Local 367, used to accuse Union Pacific executives of getting preferential treatment on the pages of World-Herald: "When are you going to build a skywalk between the World-Herald and UP so you'll keep the rain off your shoulders when you deliver the press releases?"

We were reminded of that quote when we read the article on the front page of the World-Herald's April 29 Business Section about Union Pacific's intent to acquire companies that dispose of hazardous waste. They've ruled out buying US Ecology because of some liability problems--non-nuclear, of course--but are still considering Browning-Ferris. U.P. is the industry leader in hazardous waste transport, and intends to grow.

The interesting thing about this article was the writer's apparent acceptance, based on a single interview with a U.P. spokesperson, that their company has "a compliant atti-

tude" when it comes to "complying with regulations to the last possible speck." Even if such a claim were true, it would be worth mentioning here that it's not too hard to comply with a regulatory agency that is grossly understaffed for the task it faces, actually inspects fewer than 1 percent of the cars passing through the state, and usually must give out defects (warnings) rather than violations associated with fines because of the requirements for fines. Even so, U.P., which carried 22 percent of the hazardous cargo in 1988, paid 45 percent of the hazardous materials fines.

The article was written by Steve Jordon, now the paper's business editor. Jordon's byline first appeared with the title "Business Editor" Sept. 13, 1989, just days after former Business Editor Alan Gersten parted company with the Herald following an article about Commercial Federal rumored to be unacceptable to the paper's management.

Racial Tension at Burke High

Last month feelings among black students at Burke High erupted when a white counselor remarked "Those black kids are fighting again. The remark itself would seem

innocent enough to many, but blacks we know have expressed a frustration at not feeling a part of the mainstream at Burke. We wondered if there might be more to the story.

We called OPS seeking a breakdown by race of staff in each school. The figures were available and they would get them to us as soon as their computer people could pull them together, we were told. But two days later, OPS called back to say that they wouldn't give out those figures.

Twenty-three percent of Burke's students are black. What is it like for them? Of the faces in charge, enforcing discipline, serving as role models, etc., how many are white and

how many are black? If you were a black student at Burke, would you believe your chances were good at getting a teaching job with OPS? More important, why wouldn't OPS tell us the figures?

We took a look at Burke's most recent yearbook. Out of 107 faculty members there were five black teachers, and one counselor. One photo in the book left a strong impression: a white nurse was looking down at a black student who was requesting a sick pass. The nurse looked very stern, and the student was deferring. The photo was headlined "Avoiding Reality."

More on this later.

Letter from a Valentine Reader

Dear Editor:

This (Observer, March 28, 1990) was a good issue (I suppose they all are, you have such a rich pile there). I loved (John) Boyd's sly touch. A good laugh is never in vain.

I congratulate you on your objective of living on your subscriptions. In time, you will be able to expect some who care to leave you a little something in their wills. You need a

foundation that people can contribute to and that can provide the paper with some regular interest for meeting expenses.

Loved the April foolery.

Joan Matheson

Editor's note: Thanks for the kind thought. Any ideas how to get people to remember us while they're still here?

Where the Jobs are

The Observer has taken the job credit application data from the Department of Revenue and arranged the information by location. Some of the numbers are listed here. If anyone would like the rest of this information, including which corporations are promising the jobs, please contact us.

Jobs Promised by Applicants for Credit Under LB 775

Lincoln/Lancaster Co.	3,937
Omaha/Douglas Co.	11,038
Columbus/Platte Co.	681
Fremont/Dodge Co.	1,038
Grand Island/Hall Co.	754
Hastings	682
Lexington	1,285
Norfolk	773

Observer Deadlines

The next issue of the Nebraska Observer will be published May 31 (a Thursday). We must receive your story ideas by May 21. Copy is due by May 25. Story ideas for the late June issue are due June 19. Copy is due June 26.

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Oral Myologist Helps Thumb Suckers Give Up Habit

By Colleen Aagesen

Aagesen's 7-year-old daughter was successfully treated for thumb-sucking a year ago.

Oral facial myology is not exactly a household word in Nebraska. It is the study of the oral facial muscles in relation to dental and speech development. VanNorman is a member of the International Association of Oral Facial Myology, which is recognized by both the American Academy of General Dentistry and the American Speech Language and Hearing Association. VanNorman's specialty is working with digit-sucking behaviors. She took written and clinical training across the country, passing the tests necessary to become a certified oral myologist. She has also written two articles for her professional journal, where with supporting evidence and studies, she argues for the early elimination of digit sucking behaviors through behavior modification techniques.

Dr. Ed Murray, a Council Bluffs pediatric dentist who refers many patients to VanNorman, agrees that the habit can be eliminated at an early age. He says that often the dentist doesn't know what to do. He just hopes the child will give the habit up.

"I used to use habit appliances (metal or plastic plates inserted into the roof of the mouth to inhibit thumb or finger sucking). I was glad when I discovered Rose's program because I knew there was this gap in my expertise.

"Rose and I share a similar philosophy," he added. "We want to help kids, and neither one of us is afraid to buck the system if we feel we're right."

Karin Welker, whose child went through VanNorman's program, feels there is professional jealousy by some dentists and orthodontists, but that it shouldn't be that way. "An oral myologist can increase the dentists' business if they are working in the same office," she said.

Welker heard about VanNorman the way this reporter did-- through a friend. Dr. Marvin Hanson, chairman of the Department of Communication Disorders at the University of Utah, said there is a bias in the dental community to use appliances for prolonged thumb-sucking though they have a limited effectiveness.

Marcia Beck, Omaha orthodontist, says that she rarely uses habit appliances. "They take a real commitment from the child," she said.

VanNorman said most insurance companies will pay for appliances. She would like to know if insurance companies have figures measuring the effectiveness of appliances.

Celann LaGreca, director of media relations for Blue Cross/Blue Shield, said "We would never comment on whether a medical treatment was effective."

What tools do dentists have to help the prolonged thumb-sucker who is damaging his

dental growth?

Welker said her dentist would talk with her child in the reception room in front of everyone. " 'You've got to quit sucking your thumb,' he would say."

VanNorman said such nagging only increases the behavior. "There are many myths out there that I would like to address," said VanNorman.

Body Chemistry

One myth is that giving up thumb sucking will only lead to another aberrant behavior. She says there are no studies to back this up. VanNorman quotes Harvey Milkman, Denver psychology professor specializing in addictive behaviors, who says that digit sucking causes the body to release powerful, pleasure-inducing chemicals called endorphins. In his book *Craving for Ecstasy*, Milkman said the child becomes addicted to his own endorphins and the sucking behavior as a source of comfort.

"We are dealing with body chemistry here," said VanNorman.

While thumb sucking should not be ignored once permanent teeth are erupting, she said, neither should there be panic or an exaggerated sense of urgency for the young thumb- or finger-sucking child.

"I had a dentist the other day who sent me a 3-year-old. While I appreciated the referral, I told the parent to relax for a couple of years. About 5 years old is when the cognitive

powers are developed and the child will understand why he may want to stop sucking his thumb," she said.

VanNorman said thumb-sucking is a normal infant behavior. "It is pleasurable and mesmerizing," she said. "It is a confusing issue for parents."

Slow Acceptance in Midwest

Dr. Marvin Hanson, Chair of the Department of Communication Disorders, University of Utah, said oral myology is more known in the western part of the country, where has trained several myologists. He also said that oral myologists have been accepted in the East and Southeast, slower to be accepted in the Midwest. VanNorman has not had a problem giving her presentation to the schools. She has done in-services for the public schools in Omaha, Millard, Ralston, Gretna, and Elkhorn. She has also received Nebraska Department of Education Service Agency Approval. She said educators see first-hand the results off allowing a pathology to develop. "If the child's thumb is in his mouth in school, he is often so relaxed that he isn't engaged in learning. He is off in a corner by himself. He may also be the subject of ridicule by his peers. He may have tried many times to quit and suffers self-esteem loss from these failures."

Positive Behavior Mod

How do VanNorman and other oral myolo-

gists across the country help children overcome their thumb or finger sucking habits? VanNorman begins by accepting the child's feelings about "how good that old thumb tastes." She also determines at the first meeting whether the child is developmentally ready to quit.

VanNorman also spends time with the parent. It is important that there be absolutely positive feed-back for the child. Like any positive behavior modification program, it is carefully orchestrated with periodic rewards of the child's choice and a gradual weaning from external to internal rewards.

The parents are encouraged to begin the program at a period of low stress in their children's lives. Just before kindergarten or first grade, at the time of a family move or the arrival of a new sibling are not good times. The parents must have a variety of things for the child to do with his hands the first day and must help facilitate a comforting bedtime at night. Because the program is a "cold turkey" one, the child will suffer withdrawal from his or her own endorphins. But with the help of the parent, VanNorman, stickers, charts, and socks named Samantha to be worn on the hands, most children "kick the habit."

One gratifying fact for VanNorman is that parents will send their second and third child to her. "They could attempt to duplicate the program," she said. "They know how it works. But they appreciate the value of the

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Paraprofessional Finds Slow Acceptance Among Dentists

Rose Marie VanNorman finds it difficult to be diplomatic when exasperated parents of elementary school age children ask her why their dentist had not told them of her program to eliminate thumb and finger sucking.

When VanNorman sees 10-year-old children with severe malocclusion, overbite, difficulties with speech, and self-esteem problems, she wishes she could have helped that child give up his thumb at age 5. "It is wrong to allow a pathology to develop to its full potential," she said.

For 17 years VanNorman has been operating an Omaha practice that helps children give up their thumb- or finger-sucking habit. She has treated several hundred children with a success rate of more than 90 percent. Although many dentists actively refer patients to her program and others speak highly of VanNorman upon being questioned, there are dentists who have not heard of her work at all.

And the children fall through the cracks.

Last fall VanNorman thought that she was finally getting the opportunity to talk to the Omaha District Dental Society and explain just how her behavior modification program worked. She had talked on the phone with program chairman Dr. James McNight and was looking forward to her presentation at Anthony's Restaurant on Nov. 11. But as she

was selecting her slides (children's bites before and after treatment), she received a call from an area dentist saying she was not on the program.

When she called Dr. McNight, he sent her a short letter saying that "due to a scheduling conflict, I have not found an appropriate time to present your program."

McNight also verified to this reporter that there had been a scheduling conflict. McNight also said her profession "is not as recognized as other professions." He said that he was familiar with her behavior-modification program, but that orthodontists also have studied behavior modification. He added that she had a good program. "It takes some time," he said. "Several visits."

Dr. Roger Gerstner, this year's program chairman, said he is neither optimistic nor pessimistic about VanNorman getting on the program in 1990-91. He said that all programs have to be approved by the State Department of Health. To accomplish this they have to be approved by the Board of Dental Examiners, who are appointed by the Governor to review all presentation requests. "They don't just rubber-stamp programs," he said.

Gerstner said in his own practice he had no reluctance to refer patients to VanNorman. "She has helped some of my kids," he said.

One source of information which has reached many parents is the "Pediatric Hints" published by Children's Hospital and available at Baker's Supermarket. When VanNorman approached the author (also the director of Children's Hospital) about giving a presentation to the hospital, he referred her to the head of the Education Committee, who referred her back to Glow, who never returned her call. She did receive a letter from Dr. Glow 10 months later and a week after this reporter interviewed him. In the letter, he said that the "grand rounds" (educational meetings with the staff) were not an appropriate forum for her presentation.

"I wouldn't mind being ignored on this subject except for the fact that he speaks to thumb sucking in his bulletin. He is director of Children's Hospital, and this is a children's issue. In the bulletin, he concludes with 'Your child's pediatricians is an excellent source of information about thumb sucking,' and yet he won't let pediatricians hear what I have to say."

Glow also told this reporter that he didn't think a non-physician had given a presentation to "grand rounds" before. He said that were he to update his bulletin, he might include the possibility of visiting with your friendly oral myologist.

Two Women Respond to Pro-life Men

Most Profoundly Antilife Decisions Are Made by Men

Reprinted by permission of the National Catholic Reporter.

by Demetria Martinez

In his column about women in combat (NCR, March 9), Michael Garvey, whom I regard highly, remarked, "Women are every bit as good at killing people as men are. Women have been every bit as involved as men in the destruction of more than 20 million unborn children in America since the Supreme Court legalized abortion."

I nearly lost a night of sleep over those two well-crafted sentences. By the flicker of my Guadalupe candle I said to my adobe ceiling, "No, Michael, women are *not* every bit as involved with men in the destruction of the unborn."

The tearing limb from limb and the stopping of heartbeats known as abortion is an annihilation that begins long before a woman spreads her thighs on an abortionist's table.

The killing commences each time a policymaker votes against prenatal care, job-training programs, improved welfare benefits for single mothers, day care, universal health insurance and so on. The aborting starts whenever a government official opts to maintain bombs instead of babies, to escalate wars instead of the minimum wage.

We live in a vale of tears, in a patriarchy whose leaders are stupid enough to believe laws will end abortion but powerful enough to withhold from us resources needed to bear

Historically, these profoundly antilife decisions have been made mostly by men. And who bears the brunt? Women of color.

Speaking for my own, Latin women are about 60 percent more likely than Anglo women to have abortions: tragic acts by those who feel they have no economic options -- by women who traditionally have valued family life. But the smug tone of Garvey's remarks conjures an image of us women in our *barrios*, making tortillas, plotting ways to do in yet another unborn child.

Garvey's words render invisible the struggle of Latin women and others to create a truly pro-life, pro-family society. From the fields of Delano to the streets of Spanish Harlem, we have fought for a society that respects children--from conception onward--by helping families with life's most basic needs. For decades we have battled every imaginable curse, from malnutrition that stunts our unborn to racism that poisons those already born.

I don't know of one Latin woman who is "pro-abortion." We want a nation where no woman chooses abortion. We are not, how-

ever, overawed by the so-called pro-lifers' love affair with tinkering with the law. We know from a history of worrying about where the next meal comes from that abortion will go on and on and on, criminalized or not (especially when the French "abortion pill" becomes available).

And our priests can preach until the cows come home (which is their job). But a woman with no economic options does not stop to weigh the truths of the church fathers. She consults her instincts, and too often her in-

stincts tell her abortion is the lesser evil.

Consider, too, our sisters in Latin America. The millions of illegal abortions there are had mostly by women barely able to feed the children they've already got. Are they as responsible as men for the destruction of the unborn? Responsible for a Third World debt that is robbing the innocents of food, clean water and education? Responsible for a church hierarchy that advocates large families but too often fails to dispute economic systems that won't support such families?

We live in a vale of tears, in a patriarchy whose leaders are stupid enough to believe laws will end abortion but powerful enough to withhold from us resources needed to bear and rear children.

I know not one Latin woman who rejoices at the ripping of a fetus from the womb. God alone knows if there is a soul there (theologians have flip-flopped on this one for centuries). But it doesn't take much intelligence to recognize a biological fellow creature, a

Continued on next page

Buckley's Invective Won't Reduce Abortion Numbers

by Frances Mendenhall

If there is anything worse than the worst case scenarios of both sides in the abortion debate, it is the wounds inflicted by the champions of both causes. I have heard name calling from both sides, but a new low was reached by William F. Buckley Jr.'s recent hatchet job on women who have problem pregnancies (April 12, O W-H). He heavily handedly cast blame on women who are ignorant of birth control, the very young, those for whom birth control failed, and those who were careless, but bypassed the men who got them pregnant. The main thing that bothered me about Buckley's insensitive thinking, however, was his failure to take to heart the story told by the numbers; this holier-than-thou attitude makes a realistic solution to the abortion problem seem impossible.

Most of us are unaware of how many people in our day-to-day lives have had abortions. To put it into perspective, ask yourself how many divorced people you know. Too many to count, right? Abortion happens 25% more often than divorce, but the double bind women experience regarding anything that has to do with sexuality drives the reality of abortion underground. Just who is it that the Buckleys of the world are accusing? It is our sisters, our neighbors, our students, our colleagues, our mothers, our aunts, our clients, our nearest and dearest, including those we would never have

suspected. In the last year I have been speaking and writing on this subject I have been astonished by the number of people who have confided their stories to me. If everyone would talk to more people in real circumstances before they decided what public policy should be, I believe that they would wish that the women had been able to prevent the pregnancy, that the women had had better options available to continue the pregnancy, but not that their access to abortion had been denied. As it is, 1.5 million women and girls face a crisis of life without so much as a kind word or even the knowledge of the people around them every year.

What does this sad statistic have to do with responsibility? I do not believe that American women are, as Buckley suggests, less responsible than women in the Netherlands (who per capita have one seventh as many abortions in spite of permissive laws, and some say permissive mores) or more responsible than Brazilian women (who in spite of a ban on abortion have three and a half times as many per capita). The statistics point to other factors such as availability of birth control, and support for dependent families. Our society permits advertisers to use sex to sell everything from toothpaste to trucks, but balks when it comes to arming at-risk young people with anything but "just say no." Doesn't society have any responsibility?

There is plenty that a truly pro-life society can do to reduce the need for abortion. But we

must be both realistic and fair, as we are with the problem of divorce. I am not suggesting that divorce is as morally weighty as abortion, just that it is useful to ask the same practical question in both cases: how can we reduce the incidence? What if someone suggested that we make divorce go away with a stroke of a pen? Would anyone expect the problem to disappear? Would marriages get any better? Would any root causes be addressed? Would people who wanted divorces continue to pretend to be married? Of course not. Fortunately, we respond to divorce in a more rational way than we do to abortion.

None of the contributing causes of abortion will be addressed as long as we let ourselves believe it is "someone else," someone less responsible, someone who is poor, someone who is not Catholic, someone who is black, someone who wasn't brought up right. If we cannot get in touch with the real crises and pain of women all around us, at least we can realistically interpret the numbers. It is a shame that Buckley's gift for words is not matched by sensitivity.

As recent events in the Nebraska Legislature demonstrate, we must arrive at consensus before we can build any enduring solution to the problem of abortion. Right now, the things that both sides agree on are almost nonexistent. One thing we all want is for women to choose fewer abortions. Buckley's hateful rhetoric makes it seem impossible to build a society where this can happen.

Even in Humans, Not All Zygotes Are Created Equal

This first item came from the Religious Outreach newsletter, National Right to Life Committee, reprinted in the Holy Cross Bulletin.

According to the U.S. government, a cow's life begins at conception and is therefore taxable as a capital asset; the costs involved in caring for this capital asset are also deductible from the date of conception. If we can figure out that cow's life begins at conception, why is it that the most learned of judges, lawyers and even doctors pretend not to

know when a human life begins?

The second story is one that has been told as fact but we were unable to trace it to its source. Anyone know where it came from?

A happily married but childless Nebraska couple sought help in starting a family from an in vitro fertilization clinic. The clinic was able to harvest, externally fertilize, and freeze ten zygotes, but before they got them implanted the husband died.

The wife then fell upon hard times eco-

nomically. Many months passed as she struggled, but sank deeper and deeper into poverty. Her family wanted to help but were also without means. Finally, someone suggested this solution.

She should move to Missouri, whose constitution states that life begins at conception, get on welfare, and demand that the state pay to have the frozen embryos implanted one at a time with adequate spacing between the pregnancies, and collect welfare payments for ten children in the mean time.

Chicagoans Get Tough with Job Exporters

Valerie Denney is a Chicago free-lance writer and activist working with the Coalition to Keep Stewart-Warner Open. Chicago: Using The Law To Take Over Factories

By Valerie Denney/Insight Features

Sue House went to work at the Stewart-Warner plant on Chicago's North Side in 1975. She had come into town from Winnipeg, Manitoba and had been in the city less than a week when she punched the time clock on her first morning at work.

"People on the street told me I could make it in Chicago," Susan said. "They said there were jobs here for anybody wanting to work. My experience bore that out."

Times have changed.

Last fall, Stewart-Warner's parent company, BTR, announced that it would be closing up shop and moving to Mexico. Only 700 workers remain at Stewart-Warner, down from more than 5,000 in the 1960s and 1970s. They will join 200,000 others who have lost their manufacturing jobs in Chicago over the last 10 years.

They will, that is, unless an innovative, 11th-hour proposal passes the city council this spring. The legislation is designed to give the city power of eminent domain over this and other plants closed by corporate raiders.

The proposal, developed by a local law group, Business and Professional People for the Public Interest, targets the Stewart-Warner plant directly, but is also intended to provide city government with a powerful tool to stem the flow of manufacturing jobs out of the city.

"The economic lifeblood of Chicago--our industrial base--is hemorrhaging. The city is bleeding, not to death yet, but to the point of losing one or more limbs," Doug Cassel, general counsel at BTR, testified in recent hearings on the ordinance.

Workers and residents observed the danger signs of a plant closing at Stewart Warner more than four years ago. No new investment was taking place at the company; it was no longer keeping an inventory or replacement parts and employees who retired were not being replaced.

The process accelerated after Stewart-Warner was acquired in 1987 by the British conglomerate BTR, formerly British Tyre and Rubber. Soon after the takeover, BTR began shifting work from Chicago to plants in the South and Canada, and subcontracting

work to a border factory in Mexico.

When the company finally announced it was closing the plant, the city government offered BTR an attractive incentive package if they would keep jobs in the city. No dice, said company officials who were unwilling to make any job commitments to Chicago. A local buyout offer put together by the city's former Department of Economic Development commissioner, which did include job commitments in Chicago, was also rebuffed by the company.

Many considered the plant doomed, another casualty of capital's southward flight out of the Midwest. When Alderman Bernard Hansen, chairman of the Chicago City Council's Economic Development Committee, introduced the Chicago Industrial Employment Protection Ordinance in late February, plant workers and community members were surprised, but elated. Others charged that using eminent domain to stop plant closings constituted improper meddling by government in the free market system.

"It's clear to me that the approach we are taking today has made more than a few people nervous," says Hansen. "I've received phone calls--angry phone calls--over the past two weeks."

Nevertheless proponents have gathered wide support for the legislation in a short time. Business, labor and community leaders testified at recent hearings in favor of the ordinance along with religious leaders and plant workers.

"I feel people who say I'll take what I want and the hell with you should be made to feel unwelcome in our community," declared Sy Wax, CEO of Scully Jones, a small manufacturer on Chicago's South Side who supports the ordinance. The measure is carefully crafted to ensure that only corporate raiders are deterred from doing business in Chicago.

"Nobody believes all plant closings can be prevented," Cassel says. "What this ordinance does is target situations where a corporate raider comes in from the outside, acquires a Chicago business and proposes to shut it down even though the business is economically viable and even though there are purchasers in the wings ready to continue the operation."

The guidelines for a plant's qualifying for acquisition under the eminent domain ordinance are strict: the business must be viable;

it must be shut down by a corporate raider; a local investor who will keep jobs in Chicago must be available; and the corporate raider must refuse to sell. Even then, city officials must use all other means available--negotiations and incentives, for example--to save the plant before they can turn to eminent domain.

Stewart-Warner could be a model for the criteria. According to Neil Burke, business manager for Stewart-Warner's union, UAW-UE 1154, the plant is economically viable.

"In 1989 the plant made a \$1 million profit," he explains. "That's not a very respectable return on a plant with a \$50 million annual gross. But reputable financial analysts advise that relocating the plant into a new facility would generate an additional \$4 million in profit. That puts you into the ball park for that gross."

BTR is well-known as a corporate raider. Two of its U.S. plants have already moved to Juarez, Mexico. BTR made news recently when it announced a hostile takeover bid for the 105-year-old Norton Company in Worcester, Massachusetts. The company's more than 3000 employees took to the streets following the announcement, certain that acquisition by BTR must mean a future closing.

Community groups in Chicago founded the Coalition to Keep Stewart-Warner Open four years ago. Since BTR took over, the group, along with union and city officials, has used direct incentives, plans to upgrade workers' skills, and modernization proposals to keep the plant open. BTR has been unresponsive.

If adopted, the legislation would be the first of its kind in the nation. Although local governments have used eminent domain for decades in order to acquire land for public use or to encourage economic projects, its use as an anti-takeover tool is new. Only one community, New Bedford, Mass., has ever tried the concept before. In that town, Gulf and Western had disinvested in and then announced the close of the Morse Tool Cutting plant. After vigorous efforts by the community and union to keep the plant open, the plant was finally sold to a local buyer when city officials threatened to take over the plant using eminent domain.

So far Chicago officials have not been willing to flex their anti-takeover muscles. Coalition members and other supporters are taking their case to the public and meeting with aldermen and small business people to build support. The city needs to act fast if it is to save Stewart-Warner.

"Stewart-Warner loses value each week that passes with its future still in doubt," says Dan Swinney, executive director at the Midwest Center for Labor Research and member of the coalition's steering committee. "There is an urgency to this effort."

Beyond Stewart-Warner, there is a general recognition the "something" needs to be done. Plant closings on Chicago's West Side alone are expected to put 6000 workers on the street in the next two years. Passing this legislation could stop the hemorrhaging, but it will require a new way of thinking by Chicago officials and business leaders.

Antilife Decisions Made by Men, Borne by Women

Continued from previous page

coming-to-being, beauty. As the poet Jimmy Santiago Baca writes, "In her belly the baby forms like a cloud, its hands become five-leaf clovers. The skin connects and grafts. It becomes its own world, a small earth."

In war, men have killed in the name of abstractions and ideologies, such as "national security." In *barrios*, women kill be-

cause food, shelter, health care, jobs -- the particulars of security -- are not there. The men get shiny medals, a hero's welcome. For us, scorn and derision.

But we don't want shiny medals. Just some help in our struggle for the right to life, so that abortion will be no more: not just the abortion of unborn children, but of our very lives and dignity.

MY MISSION IN LIFE

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as publisher of the Nebraska Observer.**

**2 TO COMFORT THE AFFLICTED
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Bellevue Fearful That Peace Dividend Will Cut Into Meals

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by Dale Kasler

BELLEVUE, NEB. -- Peace dividend? Not here, thank you.

Not at Offutt Air Force Base, home of the Strategic Air Command, nerve center of the nation's nuclear arsenal -- and economic meal ticket of this south Omaha suburb.

Glasnost or no glasnost, SAC headquarters isn't about to crumble like the Berlin Wall. And that suits residents here just fine. Sure, they welcome an end to the Cold War, but....

"We would hate to see the United States stop having a strong defense," said Melissa Jarecke, a real estate agent here. "We feel that a strong defense is what keeps the peace."

And keeps the dollars flowing. The Air Force says Offutt pumps more than \$1.20 billion into the area economy each year, including nearly \$500 million in payroll and \$80 million in direct purchases from local businesses. Bellevue's non-Air Force population of 32,000 is eclipsed by the 42,000 base personnel, their families and retired officers.

To be sure, Offutt isn't completely immune to budget pressure. Last month 500 military personnel left under a "voluntary force reduction," said Capt. Christopher Tancredi, chief of the base's cost analysis branch. A civilian hiring freeze was imposed, too.

In addition, arms-control treaties in the late '90s might spawn significant rollbacks that would "reduce the number of people you'd require for management and things like that at SAC headquarters," said Matthew Bunn, senior analyst at the Arms Control Association in Washington, D.C.

Nevertheless, as the capital of the nation's nuclear forces, Offutt is less vulnerable to budget cuts than ordinary posts. "It's like your corporate headquarters probably wouldn't suffer as much as your plant somewhere else," Tancredi said.

Offutt may even pick up some personnel from other bases facing cutbacks, Tancredi said.

"SAC headquarters is not going to go away," Bunn acknowledged. If there are deep budget cuts in the B-2 bomber program, for example, "they will just keep more of the B-52s in the force. You need guys to manage the B-52 force the same way you need guys to manage the B-2 force."

Exon Sees No Big Cuts

Sen. J. James Exon, a Nebraska Democrat who's called for stiffer military cuts, agreed.

"Since the planning and programming of our nuclear deterrence will still be operated by SAC, I suspect SAC will absorb nowhere near the average reduction that will take place," said Exon, chairman of the Senate's strategic forces and nuclear deterrence subcommittee. "I don't see any mammoth reductions at the SAC headquarters."

No less an authority than President Bush has vowed to keep SAC strong.

"We will continue to modernize strategic forces," the president said during a February tour of SAC's underground command post.

Certainly the citizens of Bellevue haven't begun to panic.

"My business is better than it has ever been," said building contractor Fred Flott, who just finished building a video store near the base. "My people here are working overtime."

Added Janice Sands, who manages a motel here: "I should be scared. I'm not. I have tremendous faith that the base will always be here."

Not a Base Town

Besides, Bellevue doesn't get the kind of economic impact from Offutt that one might expect, said Chamber of Commerce president Jo Bohrer. Many of the military personnel shop at the PX, eat at the commissary, drink at the officers' club, go to movies at the base theater and golf at the base golf course.

And as a suburban community not far from major Omaha employers like ConAgra, Union Pacific and US West, this town doesn't depend on Offutt the way some military towns rely on their bases.

"This is not a base town," said Tancredi, a talkative 27-year-old with a north Jersey accent and a strong resemblance to actor Matthew Broderick.

"If we dried up and went away, yeah, it would be a large impact on the community," he said. "But Bellevue wouldn't die like some smaller towns like Enid, Okla., which has Vance Air Force Base, or Eaker Air Force Base out in Blytheville, Ark. There's nothing else there but cotton fields."

Still, the military has an economic impact here that would make Iowa business leaders drool.

The Iowa Angle

Iowa had only \$425 million in military contracts last year, with the lion's share concentrated at the Rockwell International electronics plant in Cedar Rapids. Although military cuts have meant a slowdown in business at Rockwell and some other Iowa contractors, Iowa politicians mostly have welcomed the diminishing Soviet threat. A smaller military budget could mean more money for education, lower interest rates for farmers (as the budget deficit is narrowed) or other uses friendly to Iowans, they say.

Out here, though, the military has been a fact of life since the Fort Crook Army post was founded in Bellevue in the 1890s. Offutt was founded in the 1920s. The Enola Gay, the plane that dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima in 1945, was built here. SAC came here in 1948.

Today Offutt also includes the 55th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing and various military-related weather, satellite and communi-

cations units. The complex, valued at more than \$3 billion, is spread over 4,000 acres.

Interaction

The military and the locals often interact. On a recent weekday morning, a stream of vendors from Omaha and Bellevue visited the base, from electricians to stationery suppliers. Metz Baking Co. of Sioux City, Ia., has one salesman from its Bellevue bakery devoted strictly to supplying the Offutt commissary. The civilian-run SAC Museum draws 100,000 visitors a year. Almost every restaurant has at least a smattering of diners in uniform.

"Every night this month we have had military stay at this hotel," said Sands, manager of the Quality Inn Crown Court. "We like the Air Force business."

More than 6,000 military retirees live around here. Some have gone to work for military contractors in Bellevue, such as TRW, McDonnell Douglas and Logicon.

"When people leave the military, those

people are good candidates for employment," said M. Gene Konopik, vice president at Sterling Software Inc. The Texas-based high-tech firm employs 225 workers in its Intelligence and Military Division, located in a new office park about a mile north of Offutt.

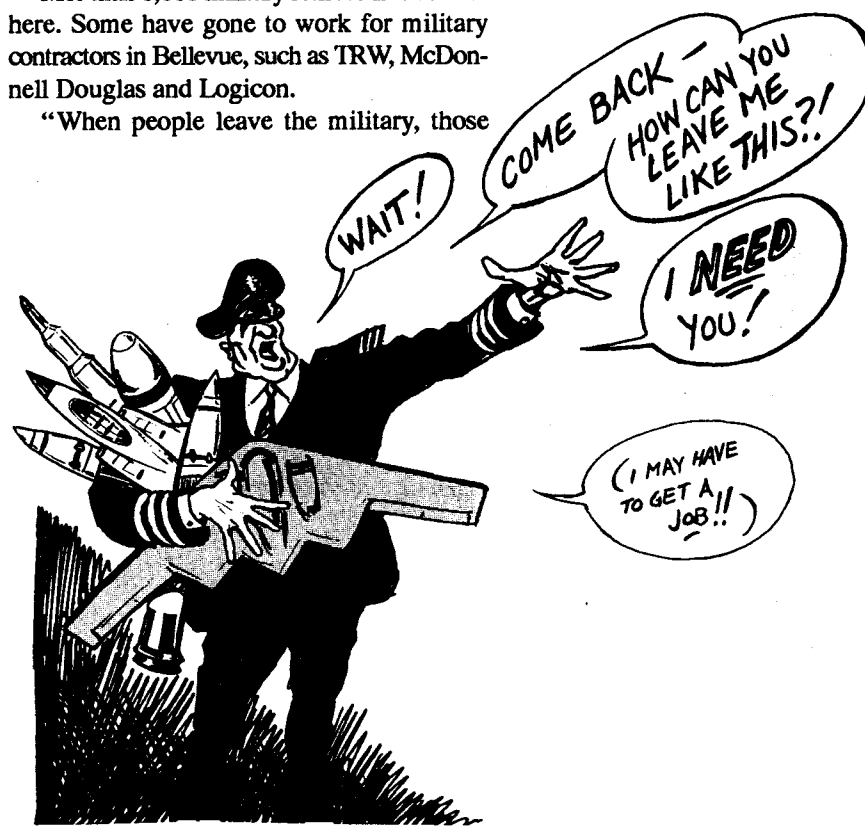
However, the division laid off 10 employees, and Konopik said:

"For the first time since I've worked in this organization, we're going to do less business in fiscal 1990 than we did in 1989."

Impact of Slowdown

To be sure, 95 percent of Konopik's business comes from other military bases, and the slowdown at those installations is the reason for the layoffs in Bellevue. Nonetheless, the

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DAVE EASON/MONTHLY PLANET

Exon's 'Mr. SAC' Ad Disappears

by Frances Mendenhall

Sen. Jim Exon is as much in favor of the peace dividend as the next person. He proposes a 5 percent reduction in the defense budget for 1991, and similar future cuts. But when it comes to decreasing Nebraska's cut, he seems to want to have it both ways.

Many will remember a television ad that the Exon campaign ran in early March referred to by many as the "Mr. SAC" ad. In it no less a military spokesman than Sen. Sam Nunn said that Exon "knows the importance of SAC to Nebraska," and that he "stands between the throbbing economy and some silent skies." The roaring of B-52's overhead added drama, but logic was sidestepped. No attempt was made to describe the decreased need that our country might have for SAC.

The Exon campaign sees \$400 million a

year in salaries and an economic impact on Nebraska of \$1 billion per year from SAC. But according to Employment Research Associates, Nebraska is a net loser in the defense spending game. In 1987 (most recent available figures), Nebraskans paid \$1.764 billion of the defense budget but only got back \$821 million, a net loss of \$943 million.

Some prominent Democrats in the Third District objected to the ad. Exon aide Greg Pallas, however, said that the overwhelming number of calls their office got about the ad were positive, with only a couple of people complaining.

But by the middle of March the original ad was no longer being used. Pallas said that the ad had been scheduled for only a limited time, and that time was up. Only excerpts mixed in with other footage were left of "Mr. SAC."

Ticket



Bush's Stingy Dividend

by Wallace C. Peterson

Lo! How fares the peace dividend? No too well if we look critically at Mr. Bush's budget for fiscal 1991.

First, though, a couple of questions. What is the "peace dividend," anyway? Second, how is it measured?

The idea of a "peace dividend" is straightforward. It is the money saved when the government cuts back on military spending, nothing more, nothing less.

Now that the Soviet Empire is in disarray, the presumption is that the "cold war" is about over. Therefore, we can cut back sharply on what we have been spending for weaponry. So there should be a "peace dividend."

There isn't much disagreement on the foregoing. Where there is disagreement -- serious disagreement -- is on how we should measure this "dividend" and how big it is going to be.

One way to measure the "peace dividend" -- the way suggested here -- is to compare what happened after the Vietnam war build-up to what the Bush Administration is proposing following the Reagan era arms build-up.

We shall make two comparisons along this line. First, we shall compare the percent of the gross national product going for military spending during and after the arms build-up. Our second comparison is between military spending measured in constant dollars during and after an arms build-up.

For making this comparison we have two periods in which an arms build-up took place. The Vietnam war period (1967-1973) and the Reagan era (1981-1988), and two periods in which arms spending was reduced, the post-Vietnam years (1974-1980), and the post-Cold War era (1984-1995).

The Vietnam and the Reagan era build-ups

lasted eight years each. The Post-Vietnam "build-down" lasted seven years, as will the anticipated post-Cold war "build-down."

Now for the comparisons. The table shows for these periods the annual average ratio of military spending to the GNP, and the average yearly value of military spending in billions of constant (1982) dollars. The latter means dollar spending correct for price changes.

How do we interpret these figures? After Vietnam the "peace dividend" as measured by the share of national output going to the military was 2.3 percent of the GNP (7.5-5.2%). Put another way, Post-Vietnam military spending relative to the GNP was 69.3 percent of Vietnam spending.

In dollars of constant value, the post Vietnam "peace dividend" averaged \$20 billion per year.

What about the post Cold War "peace dividend"? If the Bush budgets are followed, it will be much smaller than after Vietnam.

When measured, as above, a percent of the GNP, the Bush "peace dividend" is only 1.4 percent (6.3-4.9%). For the Bush era post-Cold War military spending will average 77.8 percent of Reagan era military spending.

In dollars, the contrast is more dramatic. In the Bush era, unless Congress changes things, the "peace dividend" in dollars of constant

Period	Military/ GNP	Military Outlays
Vietnam War (1967-73)	7.5%	\$182 billion
Post-Vietnam (1974-80)	5.2	162 billion
Reagan Era (1981-1988)	6.3	227 billion
Post Cold War (1989-1995)	4.9	220 billion

value will be a mere \$7 billion per year.

Given the enormously greater magnitude and significance of the ending of the Cold War relative to the ending of the Vietnam war, one can only wonder: where is the peace dividend?

Washington Activists Rally Groups For Peacetime Economic Diversification

by Colman McCarthy

SEATTLE -- Napoleon's sigh of dismay at the Treaty of Amiens in 1802 is fit for Washington state in 1990: "What a beautiful fix we are in now; peace has been declared."

A headline in the Spokane Chronicle three years ago read: "Peace May Not Be Best for Boeing; Upcoming (INF) Treaty May Lead to Cuts in Defense Budget." In April of the same year, the Defense News reported: "Defense-related stock-trading values have fallen so precipitously in the past two weeks that one Wall Street analyst says investors appear to be reacting to 'the fear of an outbreak of world peace.'"

With the sky falling in, or at least with Pentagon silver-lined clouds drifting away, the state of Washington had a few citizens who saw the subsiding of Cold War tension as an opportunity -- not a disaster.

Under a campaign called "Prepared for Peace," they began marshalling the facts on the state's military dependence: More than \$6.4 billion in Pentagon money came to Washington in 1987. Three of its eight con-

If military spending in Washington were food stamps, the state would be one of America's welfare queens....

gressional districts took in more than \$1 billion. Eight percent of the work force -- 160,000 civilian workers -- are employed by military-dependent firms. In King County alone -- home to Boeing, Honeywell and the University of Washington -- 20,000 civilian jobs are military related. Fort Lewis, McChord Air

Force Base and the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard are among the Pentagon's local installations.

If military spending in Washington were food stamps, the state would be one of America's welfare queens, driving to the bank in a stretch limousine and with its congressional delegation as the police escort.

The Seattle office of SANE/FREEZE delivered the facts to the citizens of Washington. Its organizers rallied labor unions, chambers of commerce, business groups and the media, arguing that advance preparation is essential to surviving the day when the fat and long teat of the Pentagon sacred cow begins to dry.

SANE/FREEZE, backed by a diversity of public support, began working on the state legislature. Late last month, the politicians passed and the governor signed the Defense

Diversification Bill. The new law, with first-year funding of \$200,000, creates a program with the Department of Community Development to help workers and their military-dependent companies make the contingency conversion from a war to a peacetime economy.

Washington is the first state to have the legislative gumption to organize for economic conversion. In the SANE/FREEZE office, Bill Patz -- who did much of his group's legwork in persuading citizens and politicians that the diversification law would be pro-job and not anti-defense -- said that the Boeings and other giants will survive. But help is urgently needed for the "small businesses around the state. Hundreds of these subcontractors are here. They have work forces of 50, 40 or 30 people. They are firms having

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What's to Become of the 'Sandalistas'?

by Richard Flamer

During Daniel Ortega's term as president of Nicaragua, more than 90 separate groups both in the country and out provided a significant political force supporting the Sandinista government. Nebraskans for Peace (part of the larger Witness for Peace movement), Veterans for Peace, Bikes Not Bombs and other groups from the U.S., Canada, Europe and Japan provided an extensive support system. These groups, called "Sandalistas" by Ortega's opponents ("Sandalista" refers to the generally casual, sloppy attire of Sandinista supporters) are now in a precarious position if they chose to remain in Nicaragua.

The Union of National Opposition (UNO) has come out strongly in favor of greater controls over visa requirements. The proposed controls would shorten the length of time "Sandalistas" can stay. Discussions are also being conducted on the possibility of taxing donations from all international sources unless they come through government channels, a move which would allow the new government to receive aid from the U.S. government but effectively cut off aid from outside groups.

Part of the power of the Sandino Front had been its world recognition and consequent wooing of funds from outside sources. When U.S. President Ronald Reagan imposed a trade embargo on Nicaragua in 1984 and increased funding for the full-scale merce-

nary war, European leftists responded with coffee brigades, business consultants, nursing assistance and more. U.S. and Canadian supporters of the Sandinistas began similar aid prior to the embargo and increased their support substantially in 1984-85.

With the cultural and political ties of the various parties, European exchange programs were developed. Two large cultural centers in Granada and Leon were built by a group associated with the West German Green Party. A Dutch program supported by architects and builders resulted in a shipload of tin roofing panels and a series of builder teams that designed and built low-cost housing for the newly landed peasants and taught Nicaraguans how to do the same. Several American individuals and groups also got involved -- sculptor Bill Farmer and social work professor Ann Coyne, both Nebraskans, are now working on projects in Nicaragua.

Now, these groups, along with most foreigners within the country, are in jeopardy.

The impetus for these discussions is from Dr. Virgilio Godoy, the incoming vice president (Godoy was a former minister of labor and a member of the Sandinista Directorate until he was kicked out) and his desire to eliminate support for the FSLN and its world-wide base. Others among the the UNO coalition are suggesting restraint. Several close advisers to newly elected president Violetta Chamorro have indicated that cutting off any aid, in

whatever form, would be a losing proposition from all perspectives.

For the future, I suspect that visa regulations will be more restrictive with shorter time limits and, in general, tougher rules for all non-residents. The UNO coalition will need injections of capital into the economy so that any direct refusals of aid are highly unlikely. The possibility of an arbitrary tax on non-governmental aid remains strong.

Perhaps the FSLN will, now that it has fewer resources, need to rely on its European allies to help perpetuate the party's strength. Whatever happens, any change in the system which allowed this support system to remain in Nicaragua for long periods of time is bound to weaken the Sandinista strength.

Nebraska Social Worker in Nicaragua Hopes for 'Unfettered' Exit

Ann Coyne, a professor of social work at UNO, is now working on a project providing foster care to children orphaned as a result of the war in Nicaragua.

Ann gave up trying to get a technical visa and is now in the country on a visitor's visa. She is now trying to get a work cedula, which means that she will also have an exit visa.

Ann writes, "Right now things are unsettled enough that we all want an unfettered escape route...."

Squatters in Managua Get Farewell Present from Sandanistas: Land

by Richard Flamer

The author is an Omaha art dealer who was in Nicaragua to observe the elections in February

In the history of Central America, the land distribution system in Nicaragua under the Sandinistas has never been rivaled. When the Sandinistas won in the elections of 1984 they began an ambitious program of redistributing vacant lands and lands formerly belonging to the Somoza family. The vacant lands were appropriated from landholders who had not used the acreage for any purpose for the five preceding years.

As a result, thousands of Nicaraguan families were settled on subsistence farms and abandoned lots within the cities.

The distribution program was successful, but thousands of families were still waiting when the results of the Opposition victory in the February elections were announced. Most of those waiting were internal refugees who'd fled the fighting of the Contra War in the contested regions of the north and southeast.

On Feb. 27, two days after the election, the new landrush began.

On my return to Managua in mid-March, the squatters had cordoned off large sectors of public land and, working by consensus among themselves, divided the land into lots, mark-

ing corner boundaries with wooden posts, using barbed wire to mark the housing sites, they had begun to build homes.

Each of the two sectors that I visited, located behind the two large markets on the east side of the city, contained more than 300 lots.

The response of the Sandinista officials in charge of the city was to decry the taking of public lands, but they made no effort to dislodge the new homeowners.

The houses, made of discarded packing crates, bent pieces of metal (usually from old car hoods) and cardboard, were being erected with borrowed tools. One hammer was circulating among five structures on the afternoon of my visit.

Often, I was told, a family of five or six people would live in these huts, which were no larger than 10 ft. x 12 ft.

Jose Gordio and Luis Arana, two young men working on the day of my visit, expressed their concerns about life in Managua. They both were building to house their families and had great hopes that the Sandinistas would legitimize their titles before leaving office. They both agreed that under the ruling party (UNO) they would never have the opportunity to own a house.

Their hopes were fulfilled. At the end of March the Sandinista National Assembly passed



Squatter's makeshift dwelling outside Managua
(Photo: Richard Flamer)

a law which legitimized all landholdings with the transfer of power on April 25.



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Indianan on Death Row To Be Retried; Funds Needed

by Maurice Sperry

In January the Observer ran an article about Charles Smith, an Indiana prisoner on death row who was granted a new trial in light of questions that had arisen about the fairness of his original trial and of his guilt.

Since then, the Indiana Supreme Court has upheld the retrial; it is now up to the county prosecutor to decide whether to proceed with prosecuting again, or whether to release Smith. Most believe that they will prosecute, although at present no announcement has been made nor any date set.

The Observer has offered to help in Smith by printing fliers to raise funds. We have made arrangements with the Charles Smith Defense Fund to produce and loan them the money for the printing of the fliers. They are to repay us with 50% of whatever they raise until our bills are paid. The defense of capital cases is well provided for by public funds in Nebraska, but that is not always the case in other states. In Indiana, publicly funded options open to Smith are not considered adequate, and private arrangements had to be made. While the attorney fees are very low, there will be costs for travel, depositions, investigation, etc., and since Smith waived public defense, neither these nor attorney fees will be covered by public money.

In December, 1989, the Indiana Supreme Court overturned the 1983 conviction and death sentence given to Charles Smith for the December, 1982, murder of Carmen Zink. The case was on appeal from the denial of post-conviction relief in Allen Superior Court.

The defense argued that Smith was ineffectively represented during the 1983 trial. The Supreme Court agreed, ruling that trial counsel had performed at a level beneath an acceptable standard both in the sentencing phase of the trial, leading to the overturning of the death penalty and in the guilt/innocence phase, leading to the overturning of the guilty verdict.

Counsel for the defense (Deputies of the Office of Public Defender: Teresa Harper Linda Rodriguez-Torrent, and Rhonda Long-Sharp) included arguments that the trial defense counsel failed in the following ways:

-He did not properly instruct the jury on the nature of the approach he intended to use in defending his client; i.e., the establishment of an alibi.

-He failed to point out inconsistencies in the testimony of the state's primary witness, Phillip J. Lee.

-He failed to object to Lee's reference to polygraph test results as substantiation of his telling the truth, and to inform the jury that such results were inadmissible.

-He presented no argument at the penalty phase as to why the death penalty was not justified.

In March, the Indiana Supreme Court was prompted to reaffirm last December's decision, granting a defense petition to reverse the 1983 trial court's assignment of habitual offender status to Smith, and denying the state's petition to reverse their December decision.

According to the newspaper, Allen County Prosecutor Stephen Sims will probably retry Smith for the murder. There are several points that should be investigated thoroughly while considering whether or not Smith is the man

they want to charge with murder.

For example:

-There exist affidavits stating that both Phillip J. Lee and another admitted participant in the purse-snatching/murder, Briddie Johnson, have told others that Smith was not involved in the incident.

-Shortly before the murder at The Elegant Farmer Restaurant, a lady working at a nearby boutique called Judy's Fashions, called the police when she became suspicious of three men in the area. She gave the police descriptions of the men and the license plate number of the car they used. This information assisted police in making the connection with the suspects in the murder.

Later that night, a brother-in-law of Lee was detained by police for an unrelated matter, and described in the police report as wearing clothes closely matching those of one of the three men reported earlier by the lady at Judy's Fashions. That man was never implicated in the purse-snatching/murder.

After observing this case for several years, it is clear to me that Charles Smith did not get a fair trial in 1983. It is also clear that there is much reason to believe that he is innocent.

The fact that the Indiana Supreme Court has reversed the 1983 decisions may be taken as reinforcement of the idea that our criminal

justice system works. But those reversals were not necessary outcomes. Had it not been for the persistent and determined efforts of counsel from the Office of the Public Defender of Indiana, we may have experienced the execution of an innocent person.

The Charles Smith case is now entering a new phase, with the work of the Public Defender of Indiana complete. A new defense counsel must now take on the task. Fortunately, an attorney from Indianapolis, Richard Kammen, has shown an interest in representing Smith. Mr. Kammen has become quite familiar with the case over the past several years, occasionally consulting with the Public Defender.

Money is needed to pay the costs associated with an adequate defense so that a fair trial can be had. Neither Smith nor his family can afford this; they need our help.

Justice is the business and responsibility of all of us. If you would be willing to help fund the defense of Charles Smith, or if you would like more information about his case, please write or call me.

Maurice Sperry
1802 Duprey Drive
Fort Wayne, IN 46815
(219) 749-4108 (home)

Peace Activists Promote Diversification

Continued from page 7

70 or 80 percent of their business with the Pentagon."

One of them is Northwest Research Associates in Bellevue. Last year, 75 percent of its \$3.3 million gross was from Pentagon contracts, including research on a satellite-communications system and defense radar. Edward Fremouw, the president, testified in favor of the diversification bill. He is grateful for the work of SANE/FREEZE: "They started this. A year ago a lot of people felt SANE/FREEZE was in the business of military-bashing. That perception has changed." Northwest Research wants to diversify into environmental issues. Nationally, some 6.5 million civilians work for Pentagon-serving companies. The \$200,000 provided here for economic conversion is mere start-up money. With the 1980s having seen two ominous risings -- the number of poor people and the amount of military spending -- America remains enslaved to a militaristic economy. SANE/FREEZE's modest success in Washington suggests that change will come from the bottom, not the top.

It's that way elsewhere. In Baltimore last week, Jobs With Peace, an advocacy group, held its third-annual citizens hearing on the negative effects of military spending in Maryland. A similar conference was staged earlier in Miami by the Florida Peace Coalition. Ohioans had theirs in January, a two-day seminar called "Economic Transitions for Ohio's Small Business Defense Contractors."

While the rest of the U.S. faces reality, the Pentagon refuses. In the Nation magazine, Seymour Melman and Lloyd Dumas report that the central management in the Defense Department "controls the operations of 35,000 prime contracting establishments." These "top managers and their subordinates are endowed with the usual managerial imperative to maintain and enlarge their decision-making power. Accordingly, they have consistently opposed all proposals for economic-conversion planning in the United States."

The Cold Warriors, it turns out, are dug in for rear-guard action. Heavy losses -- i.e., heavy gains for the people -- are being reported in the Northwest.

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Helping Kids to Quit Thumb-Sucking

Continued from page 3
third-party influence."

Teri Deras sent all three children to Van-Norman. They were just at the right age--around 5--and they all stopped with the first meeting. "It was fun for all of them and enhanced their self-esteem and confidence."

Karen Smith wishes her daughter could have started earlier. She first heard about VanNorman through a friend at church. She said her daughter's thumb occasionally sneaks in during sleep but that her nine year old daughter is willing to wear the sock at night and has totally stopped during the day. The Smiths feel the program was a success for their daughter, but they realize some damage had already been done.

Beck said she, too, sees children she should

have seen earlier.

Welker said both orthodontists and oral myologists can help. "If the braces are trying to push the teeth in and the thumb is still pushing the teeth out, you've got a problem."

VanNorman writes a follow-up letter to every child's dentist after treatment, explaining what was done and how the child progressed. This letter also served as an introduction to what the oral myologist does.

Now she asks parents to write and talk to their dentist--to tell him or her that such a pathology should not be allowed to continue and that healthy dentition is critical to a child's healthy self-esteem. And that there are alternatives to nagging, to habit appliances, to ignoring it. That "that old habit" truly can be kicked!

Bellevue Fears Defense Spending Cuts

Continued from page 6

peace dividend is a regular topic of conversation at Sterling's four-story office building, the tallest building in Bellevue.

For the first time, the Intelligence and Military Division is going after non-military work. It recently was hired by the city of Omaha for some computer analysis work, Konopik said.

Any mention of a slowdown is unsettling in Bellevue. "With the number of people involved, we need to keep an eye on the situation," said Mayor Inez Boyd.

Nebraska Gov. Kay Orr recently met with area mayors to discuss methods of keeping ex-military personnel from leaving the state, Boyd said.

There may be a flood of them in a few years. Offutt might get hurt from the START-2 talks scheduled for the late '90s, said the Arms Control Association's Bunn.

"When you're looking five or six years down the road, you will see the two sides moving toward agreement on real deep cuts, as opposed to the sort of cosmetic deep cuts in START-1," Bunn said. "That would have an impact on SAC headquarters."

a r t c a l e n d a r

ART NEWS

Lincoln Gallery Walk

May 5

A number of Lincoln art galleries will host a Gallery Walk on Saturday, May 5, from 1 to 5 p.m. Some of the participating galleries will be having openings or other special events during the walk hours. Galleries involved are: Haydon Gallery, Burkholder Project, UNL Gallery in Richards Hall, Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery, Center for Great Plains Study at UNL, Haymarket Gallery, and the University Place Art Center.

Campaign for the Arts

United Arts Omaha, an arts funding agency which has been supported to date entirely by corporate donations, has announced a Campaign for the Arts, a United Way-style of workplace fundraising effort aimed at employees of local corporations. The program is designed to raise new money for more than 30 area arts organizations and to heighten public awareness of the outstanding arts programming available in the Omaha area. An incentive program will reward donations. Contributors of at least three dollars a month will receive the United Arts Card which offers a free admission to all UAO organizations. Contributors who give at least \$20 per month will receive signed reproduction of an Allan Tubach painting commissioned for the campaign.

For information on participating call Laura May at 346-5000.

GALLERY NOTES

Antiquarium Gallery

1215 Harney Street, Omaha
341-8077

Artists' Cooperative Gallery

405 So. 11th Street, Omaha
342-9617
Hours: Wed.-Thurs. 11-5; Fri. & Sat. 11-10; Sunday noon-5.

May 5

Opening for Char Bourg, Carol Pettit and Bob Schipper at 7 p.m. <ad>Through May Char Bourg, fused glass plates and bowls; Carol Pettit, paintings; Bob Schipper, glass panels.

Bellevue College Gallery

Galvin Road at Harvell Drive, Bellevue
293-3732. Hours: 8-9:30 M-F; 9-5 Sat.; 1-5 Sun.

April 4 - May 4

Fourth Annual Metro Seniors Show.

May 9 - June 9

Senior Thesis Show.

Bemis New Gallery

614 So. 11th, Omaha
341-7130

Hours: 11-5 daily.

Through May 6

Michael Sarich.

May 3

Bemis Lecture at 7 p.m. with Terry Rosenberg (New York; painting/sculpture), Ron Morosan (New York; painting) and Mark Behrend (Nebraska; video).

May 11

Pillow Concert at 8 p.m. Modern Dance with Dalienne Majors.

May 13

Pillow Concert at 3 p.m. with the Dundee String Trio.

May 17

Pillow Concert at 8 p.m. Evening of Ravel, Harp & Friends.

May 19

Rare Objects, a fine arts auction and more.

Burkholder Project

719 P Street, Lincoln, 477-3305.
Hours: 10-5 Monday thru Saturday
Through May: John Nollendorfs.

Cathedral Arts Project

St. Cecilia's Cathedral, 701 No. 40th Street #E2
558-3100. Hours 1-3:30 p.m. Thursday-Sunday and by appointment.
Through June 3: The Sculpture of Rudolph Torrini.

Creighton Fine Arts Gallery

Creighton University, 27th and California, Omaha, 280-2509
Hours: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday-Saturday; noon-4 Sunday.

May 2

7-9 p.m. Opening reception for Student Juried Show.

May 2-9

Annual Student Juried Art Show.

Gallery 72

2709 Leavenworth, Omaha, 345-3347
Through May 14
Richard Mock, "Urban Arms."

Garden of the Zodiac

Old Market Passageway, 1042 Howard, Omaha. 341-1877

Haydon Gallery

8th and R, Hardy Building, Lincoln
475-5421. Hours: Mon-Sat 10-5.

May 4

7 to 9 p.m. opening for Leora Platte and Carol Hartman DeVall.

Through May 26

Leora Platte, acrylic and pastel paintings; Carol Hartman DeVall, paper mache

objects.

Haymarket Art Gallery

119 So. 9th Street, Lincoln, 475-1061
Hours: 10-4:30 Tues.-Sat.; 1-4 Sunday.
Mondays by appointment.

May 5

1-5 p.m. opening reception for Barry Monohon.

May 4-27

Barry Monohon, paintings and pastels.
Hillmer Art Gallery. College of St. Mary, 1901 So. 72nd Street, Omaha 399-2621 Hours: 1-5 daily except Friday.

May 1 - May 13

College of St. Mary Senior Thesis show: Art by Veronica Hallstrom; computer graphics by Kelly Masek, Mary Jean McFadden, Anthony Peralis, Nancy Robinson, Connie Tunender and Jennifer Waugh.

Inter Arts Project

2919 Leavenworth, Omaha

Iowa Western Community College Fine Arts Gallery

2700 College Road, Council Bluffs
325-3352. Hours: 8 a.m. - 10 p.m. Mon.-Fri.

May 1-31

Steve Roberts, drawings and paintings.

Jewish Community Center

333 So. 132nd St., Omaha, 334-8200
Hours: 8 a.m.-10 p.m. M-Th.; 8-5 Fri.; 1-7 Sat.; 1-7 Sun.

Joslyn Art Museum

2200 Dodge, Omaha 342-3300.
Hours: 10-5 Tues., Wed., Fri. & Sat.; 10-9 Thurs.; 1-5 Sunday. Admission: \$2 for adults, \$1 under 12. Free Saturday before noon and to members.

Through June 24

"Jim Dine Drawings 1973-1987."

Local Artists Exchange

Standard Blue, 1415 Harney, Omaha

Museum of Nebraska Art

24th and Central Ave., Kearney
(308) 234-8559. Hours: 1-5 Tues.-Sat.
1990 Shows:

Through May 4

Kearney Schools Honors Show.

May 6 - June 8

Susan Puelz.

Passageway Gallery

417 So. 11th, Omaha, 341-1910
Hours: 11-5 M-W; 11-9 Thurs.; 11-10 Fri. & Sat.; 12-5 Sun.

Photographer's Gallery, Inc.

4831 Dodge Street, Omaha
551-5731. Hours: 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. Mon.-Fri.; 1-5 Sun.; Closed Sat.; or by appointment anytime.

Sheldon Memorial Art Gallery

12th and R Streets, UNL Campus, Lincoln, 472-2461. Hours: Tues. & Wed. 10-5; Sun. 2-9; Thurs.-Sat. 10-5 and 7-9; closed Mon.

Through May 27

"Native Vision: Art by Folks."

13th Street Gallery

1264 So. 13th Street, Omaha. Mixed media

University of Nebraska at Omaha Gallery

62nd and Dodge Streets, Omaha, 554-2686.
Hours: 8-5 Monday-Friday

Through May 4

BFA Thesis Exhibition: Marjorie Bachman, painting; Andrhea Giese-Gunia, sculpture; Amy Hannibal, drawing; Jerry Jablonski, painting; Marlene Novotny, drawing.

Des Moines Art Center

4700 Grand Ave., Des Moines, Iowa (515) 277-4405
Hours: 11-5 T, W, F, Sat.; 11-9 Thurs.; noon-5 Sun.; closed Mon.

The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art

4525 Oak Street, Kansas City, Mo., (816) 561-4000, Hours: 10-5 Tues.-Sat.; 1-5 Sunday.

Admission: \$3 adults; \$1 students. Permanent collection free on Sat.

Through June 3

"Contemporary Illustrated Books: Word and Image, 1968-1987."

Through June 17

"Impressionism: Selections from Five American Museums." Features 85 paintings and sculptures by the most celebrated Impressionists and Post-Impressionists, including Manet, Degas, Cassatt, Monet, Renoir, Sisley, Cezanne, Seurat, Gauguin and Van Gogh. Advance tickets available by calling (816) 751-1331.

Through June 3

"Warrington Colescott: Forty Years of Printmaking."

Sioux City Art Center

513 Nebraska Street, Sioux City, Iowa

Walker Gallery

Vineland Place, Minneapolis, Minn. (612) 375-7622

Recording: (612)375-7636

Permanent: Cowles Conservatory: Horticultural installation and "Standing Glass Fish" by Gehry

Through May 13

"Jasper Johns: Printed Symbols"

a r e a e v e n t s

Designer's Showhouse '90**Through May 20**

A fund-raiser for the Omaha Symphony, the Joslyn Castle at 3902 Davenport has been decorated by top interior designers and opened for tours. Tickets are \$8, hours are 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday and Tuesday; 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Wednesday, Thursday and Friday; and noon to 5 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday. For more information call 393-3637.

Jay Leno in Concert**May 6**

8 p.m. at the Orpheum Theater. Tickets from \$16.75. Call 444-4750 for information.

Mary Crook's Birthday Party**May 6 & 7**

General Crook House Museum, 30th and Fort. Exhibits and music from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Free. Call 455-9990 for more information.

Florence Days Festival**May 18**

Celebrating the 130-year-old former village with a parade, kiddie rides and other activities. Call 571-7736 for more information.

Nature Speaker Series**May 19**

Dr. Jim Foster of the Digit Fund will discuss some of the problems of preserving gorillas. At the Henry Doorly Zoo, 10th and Deer Park, 7:30 p.m. Adults \$3, children \$1.50. Call 733-8401 for information.

Soda Jerk Reunion**May 20**

At the Western Heritage Museum, 801 So. 10th, 1 to 5 p.m. General admission \$3, seniors \$2.50, children \$2. For information call 444-4750

Landmarks Home Tour**May 20**

Historic homes and buildings in Omaha's Dundee neighborhood. Sponsored by Landmarks, Inc. Call 346-1055 for information.

1990 Spring Dog Show**May 20**

The Nebraska Kennel Club All-Breed Dog Show and Obedience Trial. All day at the Civic Auditorium, 18th and Capital. Adults \$3. For more information, 451-1241.

Old-Fashioned Memorial Day Observance**May 28**

Band concert and walking tour of the historic Prospect Hill Cemetery, 32nd and

Parker. Starts at 11 a.m. Free.

FILM**May 4-6**

"El Norte" at UNO's Eppley Auditorium, 63rd & Dodge, 8 p.m. Friday and Saturday, 6 p.m. Sunday. General admission \$2, discount \$1.50. Call 554-2623 for information.

MUSIC & DANCE**May 3-5**

Creighton University End of Year Dance Concert; 8 p.m. at Creighton Performing Arts Center, 30th and Burt. Call 280-2636 for more information.

May 4 & 5

Omaha Symphony SuperPops in Concert with Marvin Hamlisch at the Orpheum Theater, 8 p.m. Ticket prices \$9.25 to \$22.25, with discounts available. For information call 342-3560.

May 6

The Ensemble of Opera/Omaha performs at 2 p.m. at Cathedral Arts Project, St. Cecilia's Cathedral, 701 No. 40th.

May 6

Joslyn Art Museum's Bagel and Bach Concert. Classical guitar with Hadley Heavin & Tom Becker in the Joslyn Fountain Court. General admission \$7.50. Brunch begins at 10:15 a.m., music at 11:15 a.m. For information, call 342-3300.

May 6

Heartland Concerts New Chamber Music Series, 5 p.m., at the Old Presbyterian Church, 2002 Franklin, Bellevue. Free. For information call 731-7650.

May 10 & 12

Omaha Symphony Series with Ruben Gonzalez, violin, 8 p.m. at the Orpheum Theater. Tickets \$9.25 to \$22.25, with discounts available. For information call 342-3560.

May 11

Modern dance with Dalienne Majors at 8 p.m., a "Pillow Concert" at the Bemis Gallery, 614 So. 11th. Call 341-7130 for more information.

May 13

Willis Ann Ross on flute and Mary Walter on harp perform at 2 p.m. at Cathedral Arts Project, St. Cecilia's Cathedral, 701 No. 40th.

May 13

The Dundee String Trio performs at 3 p.m., a "Pillow Concert" at the Bemis Gallery, 614 So. 11th. Call 341-7130 for more information.

May 17

An Evening of Ravel, Harp & Friends at 8 p.m., a "Pillow Concert" at the Bemis Gallery, 614 So. 11th. Call 341-7130 for more information.

May 19

Omaha Symphonic Chorus presents "The Three Be's" Concert with Bach, Brahms, and Broadway. At 8 p.m. at the Strauss Performing Arts Center at UNO. General admission \$7. For information call 733-8526.

May 20

The Strategic Air Command Band Brass and Percussion Ensembles perform at 2 p.m. at Cathedral Arts Project, St. Cecilia's Cathedral, 701 No. 40th.

May 27

The Nebraska Wesleyan University Key-board Percussion Ensemble perform at 2 p.m. at Cathedral Arts Project, St. Cecilia's Cathedral, 701 No. 40th.

SPORTS

The Omaha Royals AAA baseball team plays home games at Rosenblatt Stadium, 1202 Bert Murphy Drive. For ticket information call 444-4750 or 734-2550.

Home games for May and June are:

May 1: vs. Denver 7:05 p.m.

May 4: vs. Oklahoma 7:05 p.m.

May 5: vs. Oklahoma 7:05 p.m.

May 6: vs. Oklahoma 2:05 p.m.

May 8: vs. Iowa 7:05 p.m.

May 9: vs. Iowa 7:05 p.m.

May 19: vs. Toledo 7:05 p.m.

May 20: vs. Toledo 2:05 p.m.

May 22: vs. Columbus 7:05 p.m.

May 23: vs. Columbus 7:05 p.m.

May 24: vs. Columbus 7:05 p.m.

May 28: vs. Buffalo 7:05 p.m. May 29: vs. Buffalo 7:05 p.m.

May 30: vs. Buffalo 7:05 p.m.

May 12, 14, 16: Nebraska State Soccer Tournament with eight boys and eight girls teams competing for the State Championship at Bryan High (boys) 4700 Giles Road or Ralston High (girls) 90th and Park Drive.

May 16, 17, 19: State High School Baseball Tournament at Rosenblatt Stadium, 13th and Bert Murphy Drive.

May 18 & 19: State High School Track Meet at Burke High School,

12000 Burke Street. Friday 9 a.m. - 9 p.m.; Saturday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

May 19 & 20: MS150 Nebraska Odyssey, a bike ride and fund raiser for the Multiple Sclerosis Society. The bike tour will be from Waterloo to Aurora, Nebr. with an overnight stop in Milford. Call 345-9026 for information.

May 20: Rockbrook Run, a 10k run or 2

mile fun run fundraiser for the South-Southwest YMCA. Starts at 108th and Center with 8:30 a.m. check-in. \$10 entry fee. Call 390-0890 for information.

May 28: 1990 Memorial Day Run at the Boys Town Campus, 136th and West Dodge Road, starting at 9 a.m. For information, 498-1434.

THEATER**Through May 27**

"Body Leaks" at the Magic Theater, 1415 Farnam. General admission is \$5, discounted \$2. Call 346-1227 for reservations. Show Fridays and Saturdays at 7:30 p.m.; Sundays at 6:30 p.m.

May 15 & 16

"West Side Story," the national touring company, at the Orpheum Theater. Tuesday at 7:30 p.m., Wednesday at 2 and 7:30 p.m. Tickets from \$17, student and group discounts available. Call 342-7107 for reservations.

Through May 13

"Dessert Song," takes you back to the 1920s with the moonlit sand and gorgeous music of this Sigmund Romberg piece. The Rudyard Norton Theater, 5021 Underwood, 551-7360. Curtain is 8 p.m. Thur-Sat; 2 p.m. Sunday. Admission is \$10 for adults, \$9 students/seniors, \$6 for 12 and under (plus tax).

Through May 27

"The Secret Garden," a children's play based on the novel by Frances Hodgson Burnett. Presented by the Emmy Gifford Children's Theater, 3504 Center. Call 345-4849 for ticket information. Showtimes are 7 p.m. Fridays, 2 p.m. Saturday and Sunday.

Through June 30

"Nonsense," a musical comedy about a group of nuns planning a fundraiser. At the Firehouse Dinner & Theater, 11th and Jackson in the Old Market. Call 346-8833 for reservations.

Through June 16

"Do Black Patent Leather Shoes Really Reflect Up? A musical comedy about group up in a Catholic school in the '50s. At the Upstairs Dinner Theater, 221 South 19th Street. Call 344-7777 for reservations.

May 3 - 27

"Steel Magnolias," a comedy-drama set in a southern beauty parlor, is part of the Fonda/McGuire Series at the Omaha Community Playhouse, 69th and Cass. Curtain times are Thursdays at 8 p.m.; Fridays and Saturdays at 8:30; Sundays at 2 and 6:30.

For reservations call 553-0800.

Process of Elimination and the Mood of Republicans

by Norris Alfred

The Old Feller stopped in the office: "To say hello," he said. The Missus had told him to go to Jeff's Market and buy a gallon of milk. "The great-grandkids are here for a few days while the parents are in Washington, D.C. on a bus tour to see the sights." He added: "Children sure do drink lots of milk. The Missus and I can drink a couple quarts in a week. The great-grandkids drink a gallon a day."

"That's better than drinking beer, soft drinks, coffee or tea."

"I dunno about that. Of course, we wouldn't let them drink beer even if they wanted to. Canned pop is something else. There ain't no limit on how much they can drink. It's that television advertising. Everyone's having a good time on television commercials. Everyone's young and drinking canned pop. The

grandkids watch lots of television and they get the idea drinking canned pop is having a good time."

"I don't like soft drinks. They're too doggone sweet. You're right about television. It's the ruination."

"The most serious subject they talk about on television is fiber and cholesterol. I ain't a grazing animal. If you buy this and don't buy that; if you eat this and don't eat that, you won't die, even if you want to, which I don't. Not right now, anyway. If I did, you'd probably call Tracy and his trash truck. Excess Express, I think he calls it. One less Republican, you'd say, and tell Tracy to haul me away."

The Old Feller was really worked up about something or other. "What side of the bed did you get out of this morning? Are you constipated? Most Republicans I know look like

they're worrying about bowel movements. About having too many in one day or not having any. Republicans worry about not being regular."

"I'm regular as clockwork, which was the problem this morning. I couldn't get in the bathroom. The great-grandkids got there first and it just ain't right for a great-grandfather to tell the kids 'Hurry up! I gotta go!'"

"You better spend some of that money you're hoarding for your old age and put in another bathroom. You got lots of family, which means lots of visiting, and I've never heard of anyone who didn't need to go to the bathroom -- young or old. The older I get the more difficult it is to maintain control. I hear water running, I gotta go. I stay away from water fountains in parks and can only watch the Platte River flowing for a couple minutes before I get the urge to add to the flow. It's a fact of old age that bathrooms need to be available 24 hours each day. Next time you get into that need to hold it, get in your car and drive to my bathroom. It's non-political."

"The parents will be back in two more days. I never did hanker to see the sights in

Washington, D.C. But they won this bus tour in some kind of a contest and they get to see the inside of the White House and make a trek through the Capitol and the whole bit. They even get to see the Oval Office and the president's desk."

"That reminds me. You won't like this cartoon, but I think it's wonderful. There's a drawing of a four-poster bed identified as 'George Washington Slept Here.' Underneath that drawing is another one of the Oval Office in the White House. That drawing is identified as 'Ronald Reagan Slept Here.' Here it is. I got several copies. You can have one."

"I don't want it."

"Maybe you'd like this one. It's a drawing of Rodin's 'The Thinker' only this one has Reagan's facial features for the head and is labeled 'The Forgetter.' You want a copy?"

"I gotta go get the milk. I'll see you again."

"Here's another one I've got copies of that shows George Bush...." I looked up from the desk as the door slammed. The Old Feller was headed across Main Street boulevard to get the gallon of milk.

Platte Project A Threat

by Norris Alfred

The Independent printed the news that the Central Platte NRD manager, Ron Bishop, had asked the state Water Management Fund Board for \$21.2 million to help build the Prairie Bend water project on the Platte River. That reminded me of a 500-word piece I had written for the March/April 1990 Bird Watcher's Digest. The editors had requested a story on the status of the Platte River in Nebraska, to accompany a story about the sandhill cranes.

I discovered, after some phone calls, that the federal government no longer furnishes the upfront money needed to finance the feasibility of any proposed water project, including the Prairie Bend. Not only did the manager request \$1.2 million for "advance planning"--the feasibility part--he also asked for \$20 million from the state "to help build the project." Total cost of the project is estimated at \$150 million.

I also discovered, while writing the Bird Watcher's Digest piece, there is an increasing lack of enthusiasm for these water development projects by those charged with allotting public monies.

The federal government doesn't have the money for projects such as Prairie. Neither does the State of Nebraska. In the Bird Watcher's Digest article, I wrote: "What kept these proposals alive was a gravy train of funds from the feds, even though these proposals would never pay back their costs, either in the price of irrigated farmland or in the size of crop yields. These schemes benefited the few while the costs were borne by the many."

Environmentally, all were mistakes. Congress, from whence came the funds, has been receiving vociferous complaints about damages resulting from over-development, including a deterioration in water quality. The increasing salinity of the water will, eventually, lower crop yields instead of raising them.

The Platte River is the source of drinking

water for cities and villages in the Platte Valley. The proposed irrigation projects would add to the costs of maintaining safe and palatable water for these populations. Antagonism to these projects is increasing in the valley and in all of Nebraska. Campaign promises not to raise taxes are just as politically effective at state as at national levels. This resistance to paying more taxes is, ironically, benefitting the 500,000 sandhill cranes on their six-week stop-over in the Platte Valley between Lexington and Grand Island.

Exploitation of a river for private profit should be banned.

Rivers should be publicly owned and include a wide enough corridor of shore land to take in the meandering characteristics of the stream. Rivers should belong to everyone; to the rich and the poor, farmer and non-farmer, transient and resident. All that constitutes a river should be public.

Exploitation of a river for public profit should be banned.

Rivers are one of the components for sustainable life and to change them--dam and diversion, stream straightening, channelization--is to add risks of permanent damage and death to all life dependent on flowing water.

Exploitation of a river should be banned--period.

A river is as natural as a mountain, from whence the Platte River flows. It joins the Missouri River, which joins the Mississippi River, and flows to the sea. The more we disturb the natural, not understanding the connections, the more we disturb everything else.

To live without destroying the natural is to tread lightly and leave non-scarring tracks on the natural. To be civilized is to live a compassionate life, respectful of the immeasurable time needed to form the river, while realizing our transience.

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